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24 MR. HUTCHINGS: John Hutchings, J-O-H-N

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1 H-U-T-C-H-I-N-G-S. I represent the Eureka County  
2 Department Of Natural Resources and I'm based out of  
3 Eureka. I was asked to come up here and give some  
4 comments to bolster the document that we have submitted,  
5 county has submitted to the Department of Energy regarding  
6 the Yucca Mountain site.

7 I guess I would like to focus my comments today  
8 on the natural resource issues in Eureka County and really  
9 northern Nevada as a whole.

10 We are, I guess, blessed with a wide range of  
11 natural resources potential, natural resources that are  
12 currently being used to support our economy, mining,  
13 things like ranching and agriculture.

14 In the past those have been used in ways -- I'm  
15 putting my thoughts together here -- that aren't wholly as  
16 sustainable as a county or nation. Frankly, we're moving  
17 towards trying to use our natural resources in a way that  
18 benefits everybody, something that we can do long into the  
19 future.

20 As a matter of fact the resources that we

21 benefit from economically here in Eureka County, northern  
22 Nevada are of great benefit to the rest of country. I  
23 mean gold mining, for example, agricultural products,  
24 cattle ranching.

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1 And the tourism, recreation, hunting and all  
2 those sorts of things benefit a lot of folks from out of  
3 the area. We, of course, would like to see that continue  
4 and not only continue but continue in a way that is  
5 long-term which, of course, brings me directly to the  
6 issue of transportation of nuclear waste and that sort of  
7 business.

8 It's pretty clear from the history of the  
9 nuclear industry in the United States and other countries  
10 that accidents are not uncommon and some cases they have  
11 been purposeful such as up at Hanford.

12 Those have had a negative effect on the local  
13 community, issues primarily but also on our country as a  
14 whole because, of course, when it comes to dealing with  
15 this issue of nuclear waste today, there is a stigma  
16 associated with it. We, as a county, at least from the  
17 natural resources standpoint, really don't feel that we  
18 need to overcome that stigma. We don't need that.

19        So what I would ask of the Department of Energy  
20 and, in response to these comments, is to actively address  
21 the comments that's in written format, the comments that  
22 we have submitted as a county and allow those comments to  
23 be reviewed publicly by the folks in Eureka County.

24        There's a lot at stake and that's the reason

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1 we're here and there's a lot of discussion that needs to  
2 continue before any decisions are made. I think I would  
3 like to just leave it at that at this point.

4        Actually I do have another comment and that is  
5 relating to the timing and primarily I guess the timing of  
6 the public comments, the latest round of public comments.  
7 Clearly there wasn't enough forethought in flying this to  
8 the general public.

9        For example, the county commissioner meeting in  
10 Eureka County was scheduled and held last Friday, the same  
11 day that this past comments period was held last Friday.

12        I think there is a county commissioner that is  
13 scheduled -- is that right, Abby? -- to come this evening  
14 and give comments. But I think it would have been  
15 beneficial to have foresight in the scheduling. I'll  
16 leave it at that. Thank you.